

Applicant : Michael A. Hooker
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REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application as amended is requested.

The title has been changed to "METHOD OF FORMING A NON-UNIFORM, PROTECTIVE COATING ON A FLEXIBLE SUBSTRATE", and is now believed to be descriptive.

Claims 23-37 have been deleted.

In the Office Action dated June 27, 2003, the Examiner indicated that claims 15, 16, 54 and 55 contain allowable subject matter. Claims 15 and 54 have been written in independent form to include all limitations of the base claim. Accordingly, claims 15, 16, 54 and 55 are now believed to be in condition for immediate allowance, and a notice to this effect is earnestly solicited.

Claims 5, 20-22 and 59-61 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112 (second paragraph) as being indefinite. Claim 5 has been amended to delete "stochastically-generated", and claims 20 ad 59 have been amended to delete "printed". Accordingly, these claims are now believed to be clear and definite, thereby meeting the requirements of §112.

In the Office Action dated June 27, 2003, claims 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10-13, 17, 18, 20 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Knapp U.S. Patent No. 4,704,017. Claims 1, 2, 4, 7 and 20-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Crawley et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,948,707. Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Knapp '017 and in further view of Onda et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,244,470. Claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Knapp '017 and further in view of Wingler et al. U.S. Patent No. 4,533,397. Claim 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Knapp '017 and further in view of Rawlings et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,034,166. Claims 38, 41-43, 46-49, 52, 53 and 56-61 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Knapp '017 in view of Powell et al. U.S. Patent No. 4,611,039. Claim 39 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Knapp '017 in view of Powell '039 and in further view of Onda '470. Claims 44 and 45 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Knapp '017 in view of Powell '039 and further in view of Wingler '397. Claim 51 was rejected under

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35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Knapp '017 in view of Powell '039 and further in view of Rawlings '166. Claims 9, 11-14 and 17-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Crawley '707. Claims 38-40, 42, 44, 47-50, 52 and 59-61 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Crawley '707.

Claim 1, as amended, recites a method of forming a protective coating upon a substrate subject to abrasion. The method includes printing upon the substrate a plurality of dots with spaces of exposed substrate therebetween. The plurality of dots is cured to harden the plurality of dots into a protective coating, and the spaces between the dots permit flexibility of the substrate without damage to the plurality of dots. The substrate is formed in a molding machine after curing the plurality of dots.

With reference to page 8 of the present application, the printed and coated film can be placed in a molding machine after curing of the protective coating material. This arrangement provides substantial benefits over known arrangements, and is not believed to be disclosed or suggested by the cited references. More specifically, Knapp '017 indicates that the silicone rubber pad utilized to apply ink "must have enough flexibility to deform to fit over the convex front surface of the lens". Column 4, lines 1-3. Thus, Knapp '017 only teaches depositing an ink after the lenses are formed, and does not teach or suggest forming the substrate after curing the dots.

Crawley '707 discloses a non-slip, waterproof fabric material including an inner membrane 12, adhesive 14, and a layer of fabric 16. The outer fabric layer 16 is preferably a stretch fabric of the type of fabric known as spandex. Column 6, lines 47-48. Accordingly, Crawley '707 does not in any way contemplate forming a substrate in a molding machine after curing a plurality of dots as recited in amended claim 1. Applicant has reviewed the other references of record, and can find no teaching or suggestion to form a substrate in a molding machine after curing the protective coating. Furthermore, Applicant can find no teaching or suggestion in the cited references to provide such an arrangement.

Claims 2-4, 6-14 and 17-22 depend from claim 1, and are therefore believed to be allowable for those reasons set forth above with respect to claim 1.

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Claim 38 has been amended to more clearly recite that the substrate is formed to a desired shape of the product in a molding machine after curing the plurality of dots. As discussed above in connection with claim 1, the cited references do not disclose or suggest forming a substrate in a molding machine after curing of the dots. Accordingly, claim 38 is believed to be allowable for substantially the same reasons as set forth in more detail above in connection with claim 1. Applicant further notes that Powell '039 also does not disclose or suggest forming a substrate in a molding machine after curing the plurality of dots. Accordingly, no combination of the cited references could provide the method of amended claim 38.

Claims 39-53 and 56-61 depend from claim 38, and are therefore believed to be allowable for those reasons set forth above with respect to claim 38.

Applicant has made a concerted effort to place the present application in condition for allowance, and a notice to this effect is earnestly solicited. In the event there are any remaining informalities, the courtesy of a telephone call to the undersigned attorney would be appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,
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